



# Australian Bureau of Statistics

## 2975.0.55.015 - Census Working Paper 96/4 - Fact Sheet 15 - Overseas Visitors, 1996

Latest ISSUE Released at 11:30 AM (CANBERRA TIME) 15/09/1999

## Summary

### Main Features

#### 1996 CENSUS OF POPULATION AND HOUSING FACT SHEET 15 OVERSEAS VISITORS

The purpose of this fact sheet is to explain the treatment of overseas visitors in the Census and, in particular, explain:

- What data was collected and coded for overseas visitors in the 1996 Census; and
- How this differs from data collected in previous Censuses.

### IDENTIFYING OVERSEAS VISITORS

In the 1996 Census, overseas visitors were identified using the question for Usual Residence:

**7 What is the person's usual address?**

- 'Usual' address is that address at which the person has lived or intends to live for a total of 6 months or more in 1996.
- For persons who now have no usual address, write 'no usual address'.
- For boarders at boarding school or college, give address at boarding school or college.

( ) The address shown on the front of this form

( ) Elsewhere in Australia - please specify address

Street number and name  
.....

Suburb, rural locality or town  
.....

State/Territory Postcode  
.....

( ) Other country

( ) Same as for Person 1

( ) Elsewhere in Australia - please specify address

Street number and name  
.....

Suburb, rural locality or town  
.....

State/Territory Postcode  
.....

( ) Other country

This was similar to the 1991 Census except that, in 1991, the State of Usual Residence was collected in a separate question.

## DATA COLLECTION

The only data required for overseas visitors was Age, Sex and Registered Marital Status. However, no instruction was included on the form to tell overseas visitors that they did not have to answer all questions. Including such an instruction could have reduced data quality if respondents took the 'lazy option' of not answering most of the questions.

As in previous censuses, a flyer was produced for some short-term tourists, instructing respondents to complete as much of the form as possible, but to at least complete Questions 2 (Name), 3 (Sex), 4 (Age) and 7 (mark 'Other country' for Usual Residence). In 1996 it was available in both Japanese and Korean.

In previous censuses, if no data was obtained for Usual Residence it was imputed to Australia. In 1996 procedures were introduced to address the concerns that overseas visitors were being imputed as usual residents. These included the addition of a column to the Non Private Dwelling (NPD) Summary Form to ensure that, even where no personal form was completed, basic information on Usual Residence was obtained. If Usual Residence was not stated and no information was obtained on the NPD Summary Form, it was imputed to within Australia.

## DATA FOR OVERSEAS VISITORS

### Person Variables

For people identified as 'Overseas visitors' by the Usual Residence question, the only other **person** variables available are Age, Sex and Registered Marital Status. Answers to the remaining questions on the Census form were automatically coded to the specific category of 'Overseas visitor' for all other person variables.

The coding of the variables Age, Sex, Marital Status and Usual Residence will enable those users who require data on Overseas visitors, such as Local Government Authorities and Tourism Boards, to obtain basic demographic details without the ABS incurring major processing costs involved in processing Overseas visitors for all variables, especially those more complex in nature.

### Household/Dwelling Variables

There is no 'Overseas visitor' category for household data. Household data is output for all households, regardless of the usual residence of the people present on Census night. Thus, data are available even for households consisting of only overseas visitors.

### Family Variables

All visitors, included those from overseas, are excluded from family coding. Thus, a household consisting of only overseas visitors would be Not Applicable for family variables.

## COMPARABILITY WITH PREVIOUS CENSUSES

Overseas visitors were included in 1991 person variables. With the exclusion of overseas visitors for most variables in 1996, tables produced based on a place of enumeration basis will not be strictly comparable with those from the 1991 Census. However, given the relatively small number of overseas visitors, the impact of this will be minimal. Where

required for comparison, 1991 counts can be produced excluding overseas visitors.

## Time series profiles

In the 1996 **Time Series Profile** (2020.0) overseas visitors are shown as a separate classification category (ie. excluded from the other data items) for 1996, 1991 and 1986 Census data. This means that 1991 or 1986 data taken from the 1996 time series profile may differ from 1991 or 1986 data taken from the 1991 time series profile.

## Publications

The first release publication series **Selected Social and Housing Characteristics** (2015.0-8) contained comparisons with 1991 data. However overseas visitors were included in the 1991 data but excluded from the 1996 data. Paragraph 14 of the Explanatory Notes in these publications stated:

Data for overseas visitors (who intend to be in Australia for less than six months) are restricted to age, sex and marital status. In this publication overseas visitors contribute only to the male, female and total person counts.

In fact, this is incorrect and paragraph 14 should have read:

For the 1996 Census information for overseas visitors (who intend to be in Australia for less than six months) was restricted to age, sex and marital status. In this publication overseas visitors contribute to only the male, female and total person counts for the 1996 data, and to all of the 1991 data. This should be taken into consideration when making comparisons between the two censuses.

# About this Release

## ABOUT THIS RELEASE

Census Fact Sheets are designed to assist in the use and interpretation of Census data. They provide a summary of conceptual and data issues, and changes that have occurred since the last Census. Fact Sheets are developed and produced for a variety of areas, with a focus on a particular question of the Census form. The need for the development of a Fact Sheet is determined by the number of issues raised in a particular area. If there are numerous enquiries, a Fact Sheet will be developed to provide an explanation of the issue.

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